



Understanding heat wave vulnerability in nursing and residential homes

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Abstract:

The frequency, intensity and duration of heat waves affecting the UK (and other parts of the world) is set to increase as the climate changes with potentially serious implications for future heat-related mortality. Epidemiological research has shown that in England and Wales older people in nursing and residential homes are among those most vulnerable to the impacts of hot weather. It is argued that there is a real need to deepen the understanding of the everyday settings in which people experience heat wave conditions and the ways in which various social, cultural, institutional, and infrastructural considerations may contribute to creating vulnerability and limiting the possibilities of short- or long-term adaptation. Epidemiological evidence is reviewed to establish who is vulnerable in hot weather. This is followed by an examination of how an ethnographic and qualitative approach can be used to provide a deeper insight into how those vulnerabilities are constructed. The provisional findings of a small pilot study are presented, along with a number of the problems encountered, in order to demonstrate the type of data that can be accessed through a qualitative methodology, and how the routines and practices of everyday life may be implicated in the reproduction of vulnerability. This is a first step in understanding and developing processes of adaptation that can provide alternatives to dependency on technical cooling solutions.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09613210802076427>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Temperature

Temperature: Extreme Heat

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : United Kingdom

Health Impact: 

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Injury, Other Health Impact

Other Health Impact: heat related morbidity and mortality

Mitigation/Adaptation: 

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: 

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly

Other Vulnerable Population: nursing home residents

Resource Type: 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article, Research Article

Timescale: 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: 

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content